Packaged Drinking Water and Natural Mineral Water now being produced according to the BIS Standards is fit for human consumption.

Export contract of rice

1590. SHRIPREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's image as a grain exporter in the international market has been tarnished due to delay in execution of export contracts of rice;

(b) whether it is also a fact that non-execution of contracts by the exporters is due to FCIs inability to move grains to port and now demanding a price of Rs. 6160 as against old price of Rs. 5910 per tonne of rice on which pending contracts were signed; and

(c) if so, what urgent steps are being taken to restore India's image and preventing such lapses in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Safety standard for packaged water

1591. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after initially raising the safety standards for packaged drinking water to European Union specifications, the Bureau of Indian Standards backtracked on its move;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (c) No, Sir. BIS taking into consideration the limits of pesticide residues laid down by US FDA, EU, World Health Organization,

Codex etc. decided to quantify the limit of pesticide residues in the Indian Standards for Packaged Drinking Water and Natural Mineral Water. The revised norms now form amendment to the aforesaid Indian Standards. The revised standards have been forwarded to Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for amendment in the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has already issued a notification inviting comments from public to amend the standards of Packaged Drinking Water and Natural Mineral Water under Prevention of Food Adulteration Act Rules, 1955.

BIS specifications for bottled water

1592. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Bureau of Indian Standards has observed that the packaged water being sold under its earlier specifications was safe and fit for consumption;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether it is proposed to leave the matter at this stage without any further investigation and action?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A seminar was convened by Bureau of Indian Standards on 13th February, 2003 to determine whether the Packaged Drinking Water and Natural Mineral Water manufactured as per existing Indian Standards was fit for human consumption. The seminar was attended by eminent Scientists representing Governments bodies, representative of World Health Organization, Consumers, representatives of Industry and other Stakeholders. The seminar affirmed that the Packaged Drinking Water and Natural Mineral Water now being produced according to the BIS Standards is fit for human consumption.

(c) No, Sir. Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has already evolved amendments in Indian Standards for Packaged Drinking Water and Natural MinerafWater in order to align them with the world's best norms for pesticide residues. They will be implemented after they are incorporated in the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 which is administered by